THE RAGTIME SOCIETY

DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF CLASSIC RAGTIME

P.O. BOX 8 KING, ONT., CANADA

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If you remember, we closed the last Bulletin with the statement that we would again publish late in August - so it looks like we are just about dead on schedule. We have been tardy about answering your mail, since Jim Kinnear has been away for about five weeks. Jim was on an 8000 mile driving trip out to the West Coast and back. A report on his trip is included in this issue. Last Bulletin we mentioned how much we admired our foreign subscribers who operate even more "alone" than we do, and who have a much harder time than we have acquiring music, rolls, records, etcetera. We inferred that they follow their hobby of Ragtime in a "vacuum" so-to-speak, getting what "scraps" they can from North America. Oh, how wrong we were.

We would like to tell you something in this issue about a subscriber in France - Jean-C. Averty. Mr. Averty is a director of the French state-owned television network. He is a keen Ragtime enthusiast. He is so keen that he makes us look pallid by comparison. In the last three years he has directed nine television shows on Ragtime. Some of these shows were all Ragtime and some were only partly Ragtime. The thing that makes us blush, is that here in North America - the birthplace of this wonderful music - we have never done anything on the scale that he has done in France. It's a shame that the boys on Madison Avenue don't realize what widespread interest there could be in this wonderful music that is truly American in character. With the exception of "Those Ragtime Years", and the excellent work by Max Morath on the educational network, there has been, to my knowledge, nothing done on a national scale either in Canada or the U.S. that even approaches the French activity.

Our hat is off to you Mr. Averty. All I can say, is that America's loss is France's gain. It is certainly a paradox that the first (predatory "Porgy and Bess") truly American folk opera - "Treemonisha" by Scott Joplin - will have its television debut in France. Maybe Mr. Averty could provide the Society with a Kinescope and we could organize showings in this country for Society members.

Reproduced here are excerpts from Mr. Averty's letter. In the next issue of the Bulletin we will reproduce information about French musicians who play Ragtime, and the programmes from some of Mr. Averty's television shows that have already been seen in France by 12 million viewers.

> "Thank you for your kind letter and complete bunch of your precious bulletin, and also the two sheet music. What a pleasure to play on my piano the wonderful strains of

"Original Rags" just as written and "slow"!!!!!

I thank you for the interest you get in my TV. activity concerning rag-time. You will find included in this letter a complete list of the TV. program I have personally directed and produced during those last three years. It will maybe seem to you that they are very few, but don't forget we are in France and that is a lot of problem when you have to perform such transmission for an audience of 10 or 12 millions spectactors who are accustomed to "rock'n'roll", "samba" and now "twist"!!! You understand what I mean...

I have been obliged to delay my next second "Hommage to Scott Joplin" till next October or September 1962, because the pianists I intended to use for this program have left the city for playing in some sea resorts in South of France. But don't worry about it. I am positive. There will be another "Hommage to Scott Joplin" on French TV. during Fall, and believe me that would be a great program. I have already contacted for this program Negro pianist Joe Turner (who is playing in Paris at the Calavadore Club, presently) and the best French pianist: Claude Bolling and Eddie Bernard. They are very capable and skillfull, and I think that more than 50 numbers by Joplin will be played, in their full version. I intend to stage also "TREEMONISHA" but for this project I shall be obliged to go to pay a visit at the London British Museum which possess a copy of the opera. I have microfilmed musical score of this book four years ago and the Claude Bolling's Band is already rehearsing it since two months. I hope that Joplin would be glad to know that!

Thank you for everything in advance.

Your raggy friend,

Jean-C. Averty."

Performers

Bob Darch has finished his stint at the Dawson City Festival in the Yukon and is now at The Holiday Inn, Joplin, Mo. Bob, as some of you know, is not the world's best correspondent; however, we know his visit to the far north was a great success. The Festival had some bad moments this summer with financial problems, accomodation problems,etc. However, Bob had no trouble playing on the beached stern wheeler, the S. S. Keno. The following item appeared in a Toronto paper under the headline "Ragtimer Darch Rescues Festival".

"While everything is now fairly rosy for the Dawson Gold Rush Festival, (the Yukon Government stepped in last week and guaranteed the remaining performances of "Foxy" with a $62,500 loan), there are still grumblings. The local saloon keepers banded together and declared war on the S. S. Keno which has been grabbing all the customers. Songstress Pan Hyatt and

ragtimer Bob Darch have been packing them in aboard the beached stern-wheeler turned saloon."

We will look forward to seeing Bob in Toronto in October.

Johnny Maddox is here now at the Club 76, and leaves this week. He will be in Denver from October 1st. to October 14th., then Rapid City till November 16th.

Wally Rose is, we understand, back in San Francisco from Hawaii.

While we are talking about performers, we would like to mention that Bob Darch, Max Morath, Wally Rose and Johnny Maddox have all been very generous in their praise of The Ragtime Society. Our subscribers grow in number every month, and a substantial volume of the new names come to us through contacts made by these men - thank you all for not only playing Ragtime but for interesting people enough to have them join the Society.

Trebor Ticknor, Al Striker, and Don Franz just finished a very successful engagement at the new Club 76 in Winnipeg, Manitoba. They have returned to St. Louis where I presume they will appear from time to time at the Natchez Queen. A report on Trebor is included in Jim's description of his western trip.

We would like to mention another performer that some of you may have heard - Ray Rose. Ray hails from Joplin, Mo., and has just finished an engagement at the La Salle in Montreal. He will be at The Holiday Spot, Minot, N. Dakota, for two weeks commencing August 20th. The Robidoux Hotel, St. Joseph, Mo., for five weeks from September 3rd., then to the Gas Lamp in Omaha, Nebraska, later in the fall.

Sheet Music

As in the past, I am afraid our list of subscribers is just not large enough to sustain our music printing efforts. However, we intend to forge ahead and hope some day to break even. Many of you wrote pointing out that "Frog Legs Rag" was in the Melrose folio. We knew this, of course, but assumed that since this folio is now out of print many of you would not have it. We were wrong. Since less than the required number to make it feasible have ordered it, we will defer publishing it until we see if any more of you want it. If there are not enough additional requests in the next month we will return the money to those who have sent their $1.00. "St. Louis Rag" is being printed now. We do have a surprise for you. Whenever possible from now on, we will do the original cover of the sheet music when we reproduce it. We may not be able to do this in every case, since some of the original covers will not reproduce or our copies are too tattered. "St. Louis Rag" will show (in black and white) the original cover, as well as the music.

We have a second surprise: Mrs. Joseph F. Lamb has been kind enough to lend us her only copy of "Sensation Rag" by her husband. She has also given us permission to reproduce it for subscribers. We are going to print it full size, $9\frac{1}{2}$" x $12\frac{1}{2}$", cover and all. We will do it in black and white, whereas the original had a green cover. This music will be

an exact reproduction of the original. It will be ready in less than a week. Rather than follow our usual practice of waiting to see if we get enough orders, we have forged ahead - so we hope many of you will order ($1.00) this wonderful tune "Sensation Rag" by Joseph F. Lamb.

As we said in our last issue, if enough of you want it we will also publish "Sunflower Slow Drag" by Joplin. Please let us know if you want it. We think it was one of Joplin's finest numbers.

Player Piano Rolls

As some of you know, Hal Boulware has his own Roll Perforator. He has arranged to produce rolls in limited quantities under his own label, "Classics of Ragtime". We understand they track well and are a quality job. Hal is going to offer twelve selections to start with. They will all be exactly as written, with no frills or arrangements. Hall cannot, at least at this time, get the price below $3.95, U. S. funds, per roll. Postage is extra. We think this is good value for hitherto unobtainable rolls. We will report in detail next issue, as we will have had a chance to play some of these rolls ourselves. You roll fans should get in touch with Hal. This is a labour of love, and I am sure $3.95 barely covers expenses. Write direct to H. E. Boulware, 995 Keeven Lane, Florissant, Missouri.

While we are talking about rolls, we would like to bring to your attention the excellent Ragtime Rollography which is appearing in instalments in Pat Cathers' publication "Music Memories". Any piano roll collectors who do not subscribe to this publication already, should at once. The magazine is great, the Rollography is the greatest. Part One was in April-May, 1962, Part Two - June-July. Pat, I am waiting for Part Three. Contact Music Memories, 314 Windsor Drive, Birmingham, Alabama. $2.00 per year.

Special Events

The special event for this issue is the driving trip of 8000 miles by our secretary, Jim Kinnear. Jim says about his trip:

> "Musically speaking, I have just returned from a very enjoyable 4 week trip through the west. This is not to say that the rest of the trip was not pleasant, but since it was primarily a business trip, the music searching had to be done during noon hours and before closing time.
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> My trip took me to all the major cities of Western Canada, and provided some surprising revelations. I visited Winnipeg, Brandon, Regina, Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, Calgary, Kamloops, Vancouver, Victoria, Prince George, Barkerville (once the largest city west of Chicago), Edmonton, and Saskatoon.
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> I found 65 note Classic Ragtime rolls in Sault Ste. Marie, and 88 note rolls in Vancouver. I found Ragtime sheet music in Regina and in Victoria. I walked into one store in Edmonton and there right on the rack were 3 Melrose's "Ragtime Folio". In Vancouver, where there are probably more piano businesses

than in Toronto, I was shown into basements where their old rolls were carefully and neatly stacked on shelves in cupboards. Out there they repair player pianos. Around here you find the old rolls under the pile of junked player mechanisms, usually without ends or leaders.

As most of you know, radio to-day is at a fairly low level - how much rock and roll can the world take? There are a few, all be it very few, radio stations that are trying to put out quality programming.

The City of Regina in particular, is fortunate in having Station CKRM, and Mr. Art Kinnaird who is doing his level best to compete with the rock and roll that blasts forth from most of the other stations. Any of you within range of CKRM may have heard a taped plug about Ragtime which I did with Mr. Kinnaird around July 25.

There was also, I felt, much isolated effort to find out more about Ragtime, and certainly there was interest in it. However, like everything else, there is good Ragtime and bad Ragtime. I feel that those of us who are genuinely interested in preserving what was good, should do our best to assist those people who are struggling in the dark without direction, as most of us once were, and a lot of us still are.

By all odds, the high point of my trip came just 3 days after leaving Toronto, and was not equalled nor even approached for the remaining 4 weeks of the trip. This was a visit to the home of Barry Gibson in Winnipeg on Sunday evening, July 22. Also visiting were Trebor Tichenor and Al Stricker. They had just finished an engagement at Winnipeg's Club 76 and were holding forth at the Gibson's home, prior to returning to St. Louis. Trebor was playing as we went downstairs, and until I saw him at the piano, I thought I was listening to Brun Campbell's record. Trebor plays wonderful Ragtime, he plays it 'Sedalia Style', and he continued to play some 60 odd numbers until the wee hours of the morning when we had to drag him away from the piano.

Trebor has an extremely gifted capacity for Classic Ragtime as we in Toronto understand it, and plays it most exuberantly, but at the same time in a very relaxed way. The end result is most pleasing, and the evening passed like minutes. The tuba player had left Winnipeg prior to my arrival and I did not get to hear the trio. However, Al Stricker I am sure, more than made up for it with his excellent banjo accompaniment and vocal renditions of some of the old chestnuts. They tell me that they expect to be coming to Toronto but do not yet know when. It may not be until next year. We'll let you know as soon as we know ourselves.

Meanwhile, in Winnipeg, because of Darch's and the "St. Louis Ragtimers" visits, much local interest in Ragtime has been aroused, and I heard some excellent piano playing by a few recently aroused Winnipeggers. Of course these people

undoubtedly would not have been in Winnipeg had it not been for Mr. Cooke's opening of a new Club 76 there (located in Chez Pierre's Restaurant). I understand from talking to various people in both Calgary and in Vancouver, that we may see Club 76's in both these centres soon. Wait for it, you lucky people. Of course, this will also mean spreading the few good players rather thinly about, and we hope will not result in a deterioration of quality.

As John Norris said in the latest issue of Coda Magazine, "I am not too sure that the nicest part of jazz is not Ragtime piano". We've felt this way all along, John.

Jim Kinnear."

Remember, the sheet music we are offering is:

SUNFLOWER SLOW DRAG - Scott Joplin

SENSATION RAG - Joseph Lamb

We still have supplies of:

ORIGINAL RAG - Scott Joplin

ELITE SYNCOPATIONS - Scott Joplin

ST. LOUIS RAG - Tom Turpin

If enough of you want "Frog Legs" by James Scott, we will publish it. All these Society-published music pieces are $1.00 each.

John A. Fisher,
Chairman.